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THE
ANNUAL REPORT
OF THE
BOARD OF EDUCATION,
TO THE
COMMON COUNCIL OF SAN FRANCISCO,

SEPTEMBER 1st, 1854.

SAN FRANCISCO :
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REPORT.

TO THE HONORABLE, THE COMMON COUNCIL:

In compliance with Sec. 12, Chap. VI. of City Ordinances, (see Corporation Manual, page 77,) requiring the Board of Education to report "not more than ten and not less than five days before the Annual Charter Election," we, the undersigned, Members of the Board of Education of the City of San Francisco, beg leave to submit to your Honorable body the following as our Annual Report, detailing our official acts from the date of our appointment to the present time.

APPOINTMENT OF SUPERINTENDENT.

Our first act, at the commencement of our official duties, was the appointment of a Superintendent of Public Schools,—the former Superintendent (MR. NEVINS) having resigned. Our choice fell upon Mr. WM. H. O'GRADY, an Alumnus of the Vermont University, and who, for a year and a half previous to the date of his appointment by us (Oct 25, 1853,) had conducted School No. 1, Rincon Point.

CONDITION OF THE SCHOOLS.

On looking about us for our further duties, we found much to be done; and from the fact that our predecessors made no report at the close of their term, thus giving us no basis for our operations, we experienced no small embarrassment.

We found the Schools,—seven in number,—with the exception of Spring Valley, No. 6, in mere temporary build-

ings, suitable in no single respect for school purposes,—small, badly constructed, inconvenient, dilapidated, and wretched in the extreme. It was evident to us that our predecessors had not been provided with means for placing the Schools in good condition, upon a proper basis. No appropriation for building had been made by the Common Council. There was hardly a sufficient amount furnished for defraying mere current expenses, graduated upon a penurious and miserly scale.

Finding the Schools in such a condition, we spared no effort to relieve them, as far as possible, before the setting in of the rainy season, then near at hand.

School No. 3, which had been situated in a locality of physical and moral impurity, on Dupont Street,—which made a change imperative,—had been removed to more commodious and suitable quarters on Washington Street, where we fitted up and arranged with propriety and decency for its use the rear part of the basement of the new brick church, and the old frame building formerly used as a church, belonging to the Baptist society, for the same monthly rent as had been paid for the building on Dupont Street,—\$175.

School No. 2, "Happy Valley," was removed from the hovel on Minna Street, in which it had been suffered to remain from the time of its establishment, (Nov. 17, 1851,) to a comparatively large, well constructed, comfortable and commodious building on Bush Street, between Montgomery and Sansome Streets, where it was well attended during the Winter, and where it continued prosperous and flourishing until the 21st of last May, when it was removed to its present permanent location, in the new brick building situated at the corner of Bush and Stockton Streets.

School No. 4 was removed from an old tottering building in which it had been kept from the time of its commencement, (June 7th, 1852,) situated on the North West corner of Montgomery Street and Broadway, to a larger, stronger, and more commodious building, on the North West corner

of Broadway and Dupont Streets, where it is at present conducted.

School No. 5, situated on Washington Square, corner of Powell and Filbert Streets, was found in a very bad condition:—it occupied the first floor of the old building known as the Powell Hotel, built over a gully on the lower side of the Square, which,—being stopped of its natural sewerage by the intersection of Powell Street, caused all foul and decaying matter to be carried down under and around the building, causing effluvia to arise dangerous to the health of the pupils and teachers. Besides, in the upper part of the building families of different nations resided, who,—not understanding or appreciating Public Schools,—were a constant source of annoyance. But, bad as were the building, location, &c., no better could be found in any part of the District at that time; and not even the cheapest tolerable frame building could have been erected and put in readiness before the setting in of the rains. We therefore graded the lot, and put this, and all the other buildings from which the Schools had not been moved, in as good repair as possible for the approaching Winter.

With these removals of the three largest Schools, and the slight improvements in the buildings for the others, there was an increased attendance during the term, notwithstanding the severity of the rainy season,—particularly the early part,—over the preceding or Autumn term.

Knowing the relation that exists between a good school-house and a good School, we have kept this subject, viz: the wants of the Schools, constantly before us, determined to have an adequate number of the best-planned and best-constructed houses that time and means would warrant, erected as soon as possible, in order to relieve the Schools from their miserable condition; believing that the best teaching and the best directed efforts, under circumstances so unfavorable, are not only nearly *fruitless*, but that moneys thus expended are almost the same as *thrown away*. We determined to

erect,—not only large, substantial and commodious,—but even *elegant* buildings, in order that a rational division of labor and a proper classification might be effected; that the taste, as well as the “common mind” and heart, might be cultivated, and that a *true system of Education*, in its broadest sense, might be put in successful operation.

NEW BUILDING FOR SECOND DISTRICT.

With this entertained view, and this determination, we enlarged and fitted up for the use of School No. 2 the brick church, situated on a subdivision of the fifty vara School lot No. 301, purchased by the Common Council from Dr. Jesse Boring.

The building, as placed in our hands for enlargement, measured sixty feet in length by thirty in width, and was one story fourteen feet high. As it now stands, completed, it measures seventy by thirty feet surface, and is two stories high, each fourteen feet in the clear. There are eight rooms, in the building, besides the halls: three study rooms for three grades,—two on the first floor for Infant and Intermediate, and one on the second floor for the Grammar Department; four recitation rooms,—two above and two below; and one room for the principal Teacher. The lower walls of the building, which were finished when placed in our hands, have the plastering and finish laid upon the brick work; the upper walls are furred, lathed, plastered and hard finished. The floors are of yellow hard pine, tongued and grooved. *Ventilation* is secured by flues carried up in the walls, and by box-frame windows hung on weights, which slide down from the top. *Light* is admitted so as to reach the Pupils, seated at study, on the *side*. Black-boards, wrought in the walls, are amply provided for the whole school, in both the study and recitation rooms. The *furniture*,—including desks for the grammar and intermediate departments, seats for the study and recitation rooms, platforms, tables, &c.,—is made of red-wood, pine, black walnut and “tamana” wood.

According to the present arrangement the building can seat three hundred and twenty pupils, giving to each in the grammar department twelve square feet of space, and one hundred and sixty-eight cubic feet of air. On the first floor the Pupils are somewhat crowded at present. It is to be regretted that the building is not larger,—that it does not now accommodate the entire District. But, considering that it was originally designed for another purpose, we feel confident that its transformation is all that could have been expected. It will yet answer a good purpose. No doubt, when other buildings shall be erected in the vicinity, to draw off some of the Pupils, it will be quite adequate to the wants of that part of the City in which it is situated. Mr. CHARLES HOMER enlarged and finished this building, according to contract, for \$9000.

BUILDING LOTS, ENCUMBRANCES, &c.

We would here beg leave to state that our efforts in behalf of the Schools, have been, throughout our whole term, much embarrassed, and comparatively of but of little avail, owing to difficulties caused by squatters and others, who have encumbered nearly all the lots set apart for school purposes. The above mentioned building for School No. 2 was not completed until the tenth of June,—although commenced early in the Spring,—because of this. At present, out of the original fifty vara lot No. 301, there is only a subdivision measuring eighty-seven and a half feet by eight-three and a half feet in possession of the City.

In laying out our plans, we had designed to erect buildings for at least *four* of the Districts,—the First, Third, Fourth and Fifth. For sites, we proposed to make arrangements as follows:—to obtain possession of School lot No. 732, corner of Fremont and Harrison streets, for the first district, Rincon Point; to sell or exchange No. 345, on California street, for more eligible site for the third district; No. 462, corner Filbert and Kearny street, for one in the

fourth district ; and No. 695, corner of Stockton and Francisco streets, for more suitable lot for the fifth district.

Out of nine lots set apart, September 17th, 1852, by the Commissioners of the Funded Debt, Nos. 345 and 695 were alone unincumbered. The others we hoped to obtain or exchange by compromise ; and placed reliance upon some arrangement of this kind ; for the fund to be placed at our disposal — the proceeds of the sale of \$100,000 of the City Bonds,—was estimated to be no more than barely sufficient for erecting and furnishing the requisite number of buildings. It was therefore necessary to affect a compromise, or to obtain building sites by some other means than by direct purchase. But notwithstanding the Common Council passed an ordinance “authorizing the Board of Education to sell or exchange School lots,” yet it was found to be illegal. Having made all preparations necessary for building,—received plans and specifications, advertised for proposals to build, &c., we could not easily, and we did not wish to, retrace our steps. Such was the condition of the Schools, that we deemed it our imperative duty to take measures for their relief.

NEW BUILDINGS FOR DISTRICTS NOS. 4 AND 5.

Having no right to sell, exchange, or lease the School lots, we determined to make use of any lot, in any district, wherever located,—if buildings suitable for the purpose, could be erected upon them ; and also to purchase lots, if necessary, for other districts, where Schools were most needed. Accordingly, having duly advertised, and received proposals, we awarded a contract for the erection of two brick buildings, for the fourth and fifth districts, to Mr. CHARLES HOMER, a builder, for \$46,300. One of the buildings, at \$25,000, for the fourth district, was to be erected on the fifty vara lot No. 418,* on Union street, between Kearny and Montgomery streets, according to plans and

* Lot No. 418 was purchased from Captain J. L. Folsom, for \$7000.

elevations drawn by J. F. Meyer, Architect; the other building at \$21,300, was to be erected upon School lot No. 695, corner of Stockton and Francisco streets, according to plans and elevations drawn by W. H. Ranlett, Esq., Architect. These buildings are as follows:

No. 4 is one hundred feet long by forty-four feet wide in the main, and sixty-two feet wide across the front projections, — the form of the plan being like a “half letter” block capital T — thus **T**. The building is two stories high, — the first story fourteen and one-half feet, and the second fourteen feet, in the clear. The walls are in the main four courses of bricks in thickness, and five at the pilasters. All walls within are furred, lathed, plastered and hard finished. There are besides the halls, seventeen rooms: three large study rooms for three departments, as for No. 2; the infant department can be divided into two rooms by means of sliding doors; the intermediate has attached to it two large recitation rooms facing out upon the portico in front; and the grammar department has three class rooms, — two in the rear part of the building, and one large one in front facing out upon the portico; the other apartments are for toilet rooms for both sexes, on first and second floors, teacher’s room, library, apparatus, collection rooms, &c. On the first floor there are eight doors for ingress and egress, and there are two broad stairways leading to the second floor. Ventilation is secured by flues, &c., as for No. 2. Light is so arranged as to come in over the backs and sides of the pupils. Black-boards of a composition such as to secure hardness, smoothness and durability, are wrought in the walls, in all the study and recitation rooms; in the recitation rooms generally on two sides, opposite the light; in the study rooms behind the teacher’s desk, so as to enable him to explain and illustrate all subjects taught, by means of characters presented to the eye; also opposite to the desk, and on the sides of the room, for the immediate use of classes.

Not finding it in our power to obtain the most improved, elegant and durable furniture,—with cast-iron standards for seats and desks,—and believing that some future Board of Education may think proper to obtain for all the Schools such furniture, we have secured a supply, made principally of red wood, which, when well finished, will unite sufficient beauty with strength and durability. In the grammar department, the seats and desks are four feet long, each for two pupils. In height and width they are arranged in four grades, the highest desk (side next to the pupil) is twenty-eight inches; the difference between the grades is about an inch. In the intermediate departments there are also four grades; the highest there being the lowest in the grammar department. In the centre of the top of each desk a metallic ink-stand with rose-wood cover lined with cloth or chamois leather, is fixed so as to prevent the spilling or evaporation of ink.

In the infant department the pupils are seated upon benches arranged for four each, and made in four grades, ten, eleven, twelve and thirteen inches high, respectively. These seats are furnished with little mahogany boxes running across the top of the seat, one for each pupil, which will not only hold the books, slates, &c., but will keep the children apart; will afford natural rests for their elbows; and, being eight inches wide at the bottom and six at the top, will give an easy and natural seat. This building will accommodate five hundred pupils.

No. 5 is 90 feet long by 40 feet wide, surface, besides the front and rear projections on the sides, each measuring 12 feet from the main building by 24 feet in length. The plan is nearly that of a *Greek Cross*, the projections representing the short arms of the cross. The building is two stories high,—fifteen feet in the lower, and $14\frac{1}{2}$ feet clear in the upper story. The walls, partitions, ceilings,—the light, ventilation, black-boards, furniture, &c., are wrought and arranged as nearly like No. 4. as possible for a building

of a different plan. Besides the halls there are fifteen rooms:—three study rooms arranged for three departments, as in No. 4; the rest are recitation rooms, toilet, library, teacher's, apparatus rooms, &c. Although the main body of this building is not so large as No. 4, yet taking into account the front and rear projections, it will give accommodation to about the same number of pupils as No. 4.

According to contract, both of these buildings were to have been completed by the 10th of August ultimo; but owing to difficulties in the financial department of the city, they have been unavoidably delayed. No. 5 is now nearly completed; but No. 4 will not be ready for occupation before the 20th inst.

LOCATION OF BUILDINGS.

The location of No. 5 has by some been objected to. We wish to have it understood that this location was not our choice; but that another lot, No. 434, on Filbert street, was our original selection. This latter strongly recommended itself to us by its central position in the district; its natural accessibility; its protection from the ocean winds; its sunny and pleasant location, and its commanding view of the bay and a great part of the city.

This lot, with No. 418 on Union street, we had selected for the Fourth and Fifth districts, and hoped to make an arrangement by which we should receive them in exchange for the school lot No. 695; but finding that an exchange could not legally be effected, and not having sufficient funds to justify an independent purchase, then, rather than leave lot 695 lying vacant, in danger of being encumbered by squatters, we finally determined to build upon it.

Lot No. 418, was selected on account of its central location for the Fourth district, which naturally includes all of that part of the city, from Clark's Point around the base of the hill to the North Beach. A fifty vara lot suitable for the school could not be obtained near or upon the South

base of Telegraph Hill or Clark's Point ; and if found, the price demanded would have compelled us to seek elsewhere.

Some may object to the elevation of this site. This we do not regard as a valid objection ; elevated and commanding sites should always be selected for schools. They should never—if possible to avoid it—be placed in the heavy air of hollows and low places. Ventilation—pure air—should always be sought. It is as essential to the *mental* as to the *physical* health of the pupil. Much of that sluggishness and drowsiness found in many school-rooms,—bad lessons, want of interest, idleness, &c., might often be obviated by having a full supply of pure air, to keep the blood circulating with its full supply of oxygen, and the mind and feelings active and buoyant.

The labor of climbing the height is not an objection. This will secure a given amount of healthy exercise, which many persons are not generally disposed to take. It will have a decided tendency to prevent diseases of the chest and spine, and not only this, but it will strengthen the lungs, expand the chest, vitalize the blood, and develope and invigorate the whole system.

During the rainy season this School may be somewhat difficult of approach on account of the clayey quality of the earth in the vicinity. We would, therefore, recommend that the street be graded and planked before the setting in of the rainy season.

SCHOOLS NOS. 1 AND 3.

We regret that it has not been in our power to provide for the First and Third districts,—Rincon Point and Washington street, as for the Schools above described.

For a temporary arrangement, No. 3 has, since it was moved to its present location, (Baptist Church), been better provided for than any other school, having the use of two buildings ; the Grammar department occupying the rear part of the basement of the new brick church, and the

Primary, with class-rooms for both departments, the old frame building, formerly used as a church by the Baptist society. It would indeed be a fortunate circumstance, if such building or buildings were fully suitable in any single respect. There is much even in the shape, style, and general aspect of a building, aside from the *essentials* of a good school-house, that gives a favorable or unfavorable influence, or bias to the mind. The grammar room of this School is, besides being too low, rather dark and imperfectly ventilated, by no means what a room should be for tasteful and pleasing influences. Aside from all this, the buildings are much too limited; not more than one-half of the children in the district can be accommodated in the School at the present time.

School No. 1 has *suffered*. It has remained in the same old cramped building, in which it was first organized, (January, 8th, 1852,) up to the present.

At the commencement of our official duties, it was our wish and determination to relieve this School as soon as possible. But finding School No. 5 more needy in all respects, and No. 4 more so in a moral point of view, we gave our attention to those Schools, to the apparent neglect of No. 1 — apparent, because we have not been able to provide at all for this School.

Out of the issue of seven per cent. School Bonds, \$100,000 sold to Wells, Fargo & Co., only \$60,000 was taken at eighty-eight cents on the dollar; thus realizing in cash, out of the entire supposed sale, but \$52,800!

Believing it to be our duty to provide the best buildings possible, in plan, size, arrangement, elegance, &c., to answer the wants of the future as well as the present for any Schools, we have expended nearly all of the above amount, upon the buildings and grounds for Schools Nos. 4 and 5. But good arrangements have recently been made for No. 1. Captain J. Francis Hutton is now erecting upon Hampton Place, between Second and Third streets, and near Folsom

street, a handsome, substantial and well planned frame building, sixty by thirty feet surface, by two stories high, twelve feet clear in each, which will have three study rooms with class rooms, &c., arranged on the same general plan as the new brick buildings; windows set high for good and natural light; five outer doors below and two above with stairways; walls hard finished; floors yellow pine, tongued and grooved; furniture, as for the other buildings; and which, when completed, will accommodate nearly three hundred pupils. This building, with ground measuring seventy-five by one hundred and twenty-five feet, together with necessary appurtenances, we have leased for two years at the monthly rent of two hundred dollars, payable monthly in advance.

NEW BUILDINGS RECOMMENDED FOR OTHER SCHOOLS.

We would recommend, that, as soon as the requisite funds can be obtained, permanent buildings be erected — one for the third district; one for a *new* district in the vicinity of Market and Fourth or Fifth streets, — and another for the seventh district, near the Mission. This provision can not long be delayed without loss; for some of those places are already populous, and yet continue fast increasing in population.

HIGH SCHOOL.

In addition to an adequate number of Common School buildings, a High School should be provided for during the coming school year. The Common School system can not be complete without it. Besides a proper gradation and classification in the Common School, in order to insure a true progress, and derive real benefit from the system, there must be a higher grade, to which the grammar pupils may rise, and in which a more comprehensive, thorough and liberal knowledge may be attained than the Common School, from its peculiar and necessary organization can afford.

It is now actually for the pecuniary interest of the city,

to a certain degree, to have such an institution established ; for without doubt the influx of population would be greater for having the system completed. Parents and guardians in the Atlantic States, who have children and wards attending schools and seminaries there, and making desirable progress, are not, and can not be, willing to emigrate to our shores, fearing that one of their dearest and most cherished interests — the proper education of their children and wards, — must here be neglected. Many who now are here, are obliged to send their sons and daughters to Benicia, San José, or some other places, for the want of suitable higher institutions in the city. “Academies” and “High Schools” there are certainly ; but the State or the City can generally give better endowments than private individuals.

NEW ISSUE OF BONDS RECOMMENDED.

Although our citizens have been and are heavily taxed, yet we have not heard, and do not hear, any complaint raised against liberally supporting the Schools ; the people are ready to acquiesce in any reasonable demand made for them. For the above mentioned purpose, the city school tax this year should, in our opinion, be *one-half* of one per cent. on the whole assessments ; or, in addition to a tax sufficient for mere current expenses, it would be well to issue, in addition to those bonds now issued, but not sold, \$150,000, of ten per cent. bonds, maturable, — say, in ten years ; so that the people at the present time may not be burdened to pay for what those some years hence may equally enjoy, and for which they should equally bear a part in paying.

FINANCES.

Dr.

To balance placed in our hands by the last Board of Education, - - -	\$500.
To entire amount drawn from the School Department Fund for the current expenses of the Schools, - - -	41,530.
To warrant drawn for enlarging Bush street School house No. 2, - - -	9,500.
To warrants drawn on the "School Building Fund," \$52,800, arising from sale of seven per cent. Bonds, - - -	52,000.
	<hr/>
	\$103,530.

Cr.

By amount paid for the current expenses of the Schools, out of moneys raised by city tax, - - -	\$41,996.15.
By amount paid on contract for enlarging Bush street School house No. 2, -	9,000.00.
By amount paid on contract for School houses for the Schools Nos. 4 and 5, -	46,300.00.
By amount paid for grading the lots for Schools Nos. 4 and 5, - - -	4,538.85.
By amount paid on mandamus against the City Treasurer, and interest paid on moneys borrowed for part paying contract on the new buildings, - -	883.50.
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	\$102,660.50.
Amount to balance on hand, - - -	\$861.50.

The following bills are yet unpaid :

To W. H. Ranlett, architect, for plan, and superintending new building for School No. 2, \$150 ; also for plans, and

superintending new buildings for Schools Nos. 4 and 5, (one per cent. on contract) \$463. To Mr. Morrison, for cornice for School No. 4, (extra) \$230. To Charles Homer, for two windows, extra pilasters on building, and fences for School No. 5, bills not yet rendered. To S. H. Allyne and T. P. Clarke, for furniture for Schools No. 1, 4 and 5.

Besides the above balance, about five thousand dollars will be required to pay the above bills in full.

Out of the above amount paid for current expenses, there has been paid for teachers' salaries, the sum of \$28,649.50.

For rents, - - - - -	6,782.66.
For repairs, furniture, fixtures, &c., - - -	5,264.62.
For sundries, - - - - -	1,219.00.
For books for Public School Library, - - -	80.37.

Average expense for each pupil during our term, \$27.14.

SCHOOL FOR COLORED CHILDREN.

A School for the colored population of our city has been established. It is located at the corner of Jackson and Virginia streets, in the basement room of the St. Cyprian Methodist Episcopal Colored Church. The patrons of the church raised the building and fitted up for the School, the lower room, which is eleven feet high and fifty by twenty-five surface, well lighted, ventilated and has its walls hard finished. This we have leased for one year, with privilege of two, at the monthly rent of fifty dollars, payable monthly in advance. Mr. J. J. Moore, (colored) is the teacher. The School commenced on the twenty-second of last May, with twenty-three pupils; it now has forty-four registered. It has thus far been conducted quite satisfactorily, and bids fair to be prosperous and successful.

TEACHERS.

Our term began with sixteen Teachers in the Schools, — six males and ten females. At the present time, there are twenty-two, — seven males and fifteen females, — all duly

examined and appointed. In our selection of Teachers, we have endeavored to be very particular to select persons of proper temperaments, talents and fitness for this peculiar and important but too much neglected profession. We hold that all who would teach well, should not only have good attainments in science, literature, art, &c., but that they should come having a positive *partiality* for their profession, and that without this, it is useless to attempt to teach. Persons of the best talent and attainments have often signally failed for the want of it. Some of our teachers have fitted themselves for their profession in some of the best Eastern Normal and other institutions, and have shown their fitness for the positions they occupy by hitherto successfully contending against, and overcoming obstacles which have obstructed their way. While under circumstances so unfavorable, it would be difficult and perhaps unjust, to discriminate, we can unhesitatingly recommend the corps of teachers, as a whole, to the favorable notice and consideration of the people.

THE PUPILS, THE SCHOOLS, &c.

By the Superintendent's Quarterly Report for the term ending October thirty-first, 1853, it was shown that thirteen hundred and ninety-nine pupils, — seven hundred and thirty-two males, and six hundred and sixty-seven females attended the Schools. By the Report for the quarter ending July thirty-first, 1854, it will be seen that the attendance was seventeen hundred and forty-five, — nine hundred and twenty males, and eight hundred and twenty-five females, being an increase of three hundred and forty-six within three quarters. This increase is not as great as it should be. It is not in proportion to the number in the city at present, as compared with that of last October, (twenty-seven hundred and thirty;) but a greater number could not have been and can not be accommodated. The comparatively good temporary buildings furnished the Schools Nos.

2, 3 and 4, last November, gave but little difference in the dimensions of the rooms occupied, over those previously used. School No. 2, now occupying its new building, tends somewhat to enlarge the number in attendance.

Without taking into account the Schools of the second and seventh Ward, there is no doubt that with suitable buildings for all the districts, there would be at present, an attendance of twenty-five hundred in the Public Schools. It is for the want of suitable buildings and conveniences that many have been obliged to establish private schools, — to send their children out of the city to school, or to let them run where they pleased through the city, — forming habits, destructive alike to present growth and progress, and to future prosperity.

For this reason, also, as much as any other, the pupils in attendance in the Schools have not been regular, particularly they were not in the early part of our term. All then belonging to the Schools could not have been seated at once, if all had happened to be at any time together; and rather than let children run the streets, it was, and has been deemed proper to admit them into the Schools, though there were no fit accommodations for them.

The average number of pupils to each teacher on the first of last November, was eighty-seven! It is now seventy-nine! In the best provided and best arranged Schools in the East, forty is considered the best average number; in no case, in such Schools, does the maximum exceed fifty. In certain departments of well graded Schools, however, — where all the pupils are as nearly equal as possible in age, mental power and attainments, a greater average number may some times be allowed to one teacher, and with excellent success; but it is the *exception*, not the general rule.

TEXT BOOKS.

With other draw-backs, there was at the beginning of our term, a miscellany of text-books used in our Schools. This

gave rise to much merited complaint. Besides being a positive evil, as a hindrance to the pupil, and the general progress of the School, it was to the parent not only an annoyance, but a source of great expense,—particularly if the family moved from one district to another. Up to this time the books had been furnished the Schools by the Superintendent (Mr. Nevins) at private sale. The city had not, and yet has not furnished books to the pupils. We adopted a uniform series of text-books, (see Ninth Quarterly report, of Supt.,) since which we have heard no complaint,—we believe it has given general satisfaction. It would be well if the next Council would appropriate a certain sum, during the coming year, for a “School Book Fund,”—particularly for indigent children.

APPARATUS.

Not being able to perfectly grade and systematize the Schools, owing to the before-mentioned causes, we have not obtained all the apparatus necessary for the illustration of subjects studied. A part has been provided:—out-line maps for Geography; globes, for some of the largest Schools, and some complete sets of Cutter’s Anatomical charts. Black-boards have also been provided for all the Schools. In the new buildings this means of illustration has been abundantly provided. We have not only had regard to proper division of labor, but we have also had a view to the *labor itself*,—the *teaching*, and the best methods of conducting and performing it. Complete apparatus for illustrating the elementary principles of Chemistry, as well as Natural Philosophy, Physiology, Geography, Astronomy, Arithmetic, and the higher Mathematics, should be furnished the Schools, as soon as they occupy their new buildings.

THE TEACHING.

It would be superfluous to say that the teaching has necessarily been somewhat defective, particularly in some

departments, and some Schools which have been most crowded and mixed ; that in some of the infant departments in particular this has been the case. The teachers have, in performing their multifarious duties, been too much confined to "the book" ; they have not been able to go sufficiently beyond its limits, to lecture their classes, and to illustrate lessons by means of the black-board.

A greater interest is always taken in what is spoken as the teacher's own, besides its being generally more properly adapted to the wants of the child, than what is given in the book ; and the characters of our language,—the letters of the alphabet, in their various forms, styles, combinations, and powers,—and figures, maps, drawings, &c., are always more readily understood, imitated and learned, by being prepared on the board, or otherwise, by the ingenious and skillful teacher, and thus presented to the mind through the eye, than from the most elaborate stereotyped plates.

Thus too, in the higher departments, in nearly the same degree, the black-board, with the other school apparatus, is always found to be potent. The written and the oral methods should be combined ; they should never be taught independent of each other. For if the first be made particularly important, the mind will become too much habituated to the limits of mere forms and representations, without being able to go understandingly beyond them ; and in the second, without presenting some tangible or visible illustration, the young mind will often be at a loss to comprehend, and must necessarily be superficial.

One fault in teaching has been, and yet is too common ; teachers do not generally *study the lessons given out to their pupils* ! This is necessary ; *not because of any deficiency in knowledge on the part of the teacher*, but, by being thoroughly acquainted with any particular author's method of presenting principles and ideas, he may the more readily anticipate difficulties on the part of the pupil, and be better able to explain, to simplify, or to enlarge upon a particular lesson.

LIBRARY.

A nucleus of a library has within the last two quarters been formed for the teachers and pupils of the Schools. It now contains five hundred volumes of choice and well selected works, (see tenth and eleventh Quarterly Reports.) The pupils of the Schools, at present, do not have access to it, because of their generally irregular attendance and the want of permanence of the population. The teachers and honorary members of the "Teachers' Association" are only at present admitted to enjoy its benefits.

TEACHERS' ASSOCIATION.

The Teachers' Association, reorganized last November, has been, and no doubt will continue to be productive of much good, its object being the improvement of teachers in their profession. The antagonism and attrition of mind against mind in discussion; the positions assumed, and the ideas advanced in "composition" and essays; the readings, recitations, declamations, and the general interchange of thought and opinion, must always tend to subvert prejudices and biases, — to liberalize the mind, — and for the *teacher*, — be a means of arriving at the most rational and natural methods of imparting instruction, and governing and conducting a School.

REGULATIONS.

As the Schools have been hitherto, without fit buildings, mixed and crowded; impeded by irregular attendance of pupils, and a migratory population — no House of Refuge for vagrants and young offenders, — young vagabonds daily prowling about annoying the Schools, — no regular aid from the police department, we could not with propriety adopt and enforce any stringent and necessary rules and regulations for the Schools; for they could not have been observed or enforced. ✕ The Superintendent and Teachers

have conducted the Schools according to generally adopted custom, and the exigencies of particular cases. A code of *strict, written* rules would have been impracticable.

There must first be suitable buildings for all the Schools, before children can consistently be required to attend School regularly, — before the Schools can be graded and properly classified, — before any true system can be carried into effect, and before true progress can be made.

With proper endowment for all the Schools, both Common and High, under one organization; with the permanence of the population; the speedy establishment of a House of Refuge; the better condition of the streets; necessary regular aid from the police department, and the active sympathy and coöperation of the people, in behalf of this great interest, the Schools in our city will very soon compare favorably with the first in the Union.

We would, on behalf of the Schools, return our thanks to the Common Council for their prompt and generous action in making appropriations and affording necessary pecuniary relief whenever called upon, for maintaining this indispensable department of our civil and social economy; and trusting that your successors in office may be equally liberal, we conclude this Report, referring your Honorable body for further details to the Quarterly Reports of the Superintendent, herewith transmitted.

Respectfully submitted,

(Mayor) C. K. GARRISON, *President*,

(Ald.) C. O. WEST,

(Asst. Ald.) W. H. TALMADGE,

JULIUS K. ROSE,

HENRY J. WELLS.

W. H. O'GRADY, *Sec'y and Supt. Public Schools*.

